

Wycombe Wanderers 0, Slough Town 1

A FLASH of brilliance from Slough Town skipper Roger Day after just nine minutes, stood like an impenetrable barrier between soccer-weary Wycombe Wanderers and the Berks and Bucks Senior Cup in Monday night's Final replay at Marlow.

Day, Olympic representative, whose goals have come few and far between this season, unleashed a mighty right-footed shot from 25 yards out to end what had seemed a hopeless deadlock began at Elm Park, Reading, on April 28.

It climaxed a swiftly executed build-up by the Rebels and exposed a gaping channel at least five yards wide in Wycombe's defensive cover. John Maskell dived more from reflex action than in hope, but could do nothing to stop Day's special ripping into the Wanderers' net.

That one fatal moment in 210 minutes of exacting, if rarely pretty football, settled the new destination of the allied counties' major trophy from Maidenhead—1970 winners—to Dolphin Stadium.

For the record book, it also avenged Slough's 1968 final defeat by Wycombe on top of

By
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rubbing in their similar 1-0 F.A. Cup replay win in the closing stages of 1970.

But Loakes Park fans, first to admit that this was a pale shade of the Wanderers' team so proudly crowned Kings of the Isthmian League, remain unconvinced of Slough's superiority, albeit slight.

And rightly so. Everything Wycombe took in the way of pressure for the first 45 minutes last night, so they dished back out to their opponents after the interval.

On pure goal chances, it should have been John Delaney and not his counterpart, Day, climbing the steps to receive the

Senior Cup from Berks and Bucks F.A. President, Mr. F. W. Lewis, at full time.

Yet this was Wycombe's instinctive class talking. The thoughts were there, but not quickly enough to deceive Tommy Lawrence's wily squad. Only the ever-lively Tony Horseman weakened the steel nerves of a Slough back row masterfully held together by the joint efforts of Keith Mead and veteran Alf D'Arcy.

A vital setback to Wycombe came in the 19th minute, when Larry Pritchard — the eager beaver who did so much for so long to keep the forward line in the game—suffered an injury to his right leg. After quick treatment he returned, but, limping badly, took until the second half to make his mark once more.

So Slough remain something of an unsolved mystery for the Wanderers, who have yet to fathom how to undermine the confidence they have in the methods laid down by team boss Tommy Lawrence.

Without that knack, Wycombe's chances were immediately reduced at Marlow. For so much of their soul and stamina has been sapped by a tedious championship campaign that little is left in reserve for these closing fixtures.

Slough, ending as also rans in League and Amateur Cup in this, Lawrence's first year at the helm, dearly wanted a victory last night to justify themselves. They went hell for leather from the kick-off, and drew confidence from Day's unexpectedly quick breakthrough.

Wanderers' usual height advantage over the Rebels' strikers became conspicuous by its absence, with Charlie Gale a welcome steadying influence at a time when his colleagues in the back four showed patchy form.

So many loose ends were left untied. Both Searle and Horseman scorned fine chances.

Pritchard, trying to lob the ball over 'keeper Wolstenholme, turned his shot into a 'Gary Owen' instead and saw it drop on the wrong side of the crossbar after 42 minutes.

Three minutes earlier, with Slough raiding, Maskell risked a booking or worse, but escaped with just a caution after a clash with Connell. The flare-up came in retaliation following some over zealous bargaining by the Eire international, who, in company with Day and Reardon, was forever seeking out the half-chance.

In the sixth and final minute of an exaggerated injury period, came Horseman's miss of the night. He belted his shot wide across goal when positioned well.

The second half developed a distinct pattern of Slough's self-appointed defensive vigil, Wycombe's frustrating efforts to find a route through to goal, and scenes of desperation in both areas.

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Slough were visibly shaken by the oft-times intense pressure placed on them during the half, and, although the game did not get out of hand altogether, Referee Reeves had several fits of temper to contend with, the first of which arrived on 65 minutes. Paul Fusch and Reardon became heatedly involved in a pushing match over a throw-in.

Wycombe manager Brian I was first to pitch his substitute into the fray, Bernie Bremer replacing a still-limping Pritchard.

Crosby came off for Ray Hill and Slough's not surprising decision to use up as much time as possible. Swain received a 78th-minute booking for dissent, as virtually a direct result.

To the last, Wycombe might have forced an extra 30 minutes but in the first minute of another drawn-out spell of injury time, their hopes vanished. Hill raced across the field, cut off Fuschillo on an otherwise open run to goal.

And Wycombe skipper, John Delaney — three times beaten finalist with Slough — knew his jinx had struck again.

WYCOMBE WANDERERS:
Maskell, P. Fuschillo, C. Gale, Powell, J. Delaney, I. Rundle, Faulkner, B. Baker, K. Searle, Pritchard (sub. B. Bremer, 66 mins), A. Horseman.

SLOUGH TOWN: J. Wolstenholme, S. Crosby (sub. R. Hill, 74 mins), W. McPhee, W. Mead, A. D'Arcy, M. O'Sullivan, R. Day, J. Connell, D. Swain, J. Adams, T. Reardon.